

SENATE BILL 1657

By Burks

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 8-44-102; Section 10-7-503 and Title 65, Chapter 25, Part 2, relative to rural electric and community services cooperatives.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 10-7-503, is amended by adding the following language as a new, appropriately designated subsection:

() All records of any rural electric and community services cooperative created pursuant to title 65, chapter 25, part 2, shall be open for personal inspection by any member of such cooperative at all times during normal business hours of the cooperative. Those in charge of such records shall not refuse such right of inspection to any member, unless otherwise provided by state law.

SECTION 2. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 8-44-102(b)(1), is amended by adding the following language as a new, appropriately designated subdivision:

() The board of directors of any rural electric and community services cooperative created pursuant to title 65, chapter 25, part 2.

SECTION 3. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 65, Chapter 25, Part 2, is amended by adding the following language as a new, appropriately designated section:

§ 65-25-2__.

(a) Prior to the adoption of any plan which may result in the acquisition of real property for new or expanded electric power distribution facilities which may require the use of eminent domain for acquisition of real property, or for any plan which may result in the installation of new incoming power supply lines which traverse new routes or which carry higher voltages than existing supply lines, the cooperative shall:

(1) Provide not less than one hundred and twenty (120) days public notice of such plans by publishing a summary of the plans in a newspaper of general circulation in the county or counties which may be affected by the plans including all counties which may be traversed by any new, rerouted or higher voltage or supply line. The notice required by this subdivision (a)(1) may be provided by including a summary of the plans in the monthly billing statements issued to all members of the cooperative in a county which may be affected by the plans, in lieu of providing notice of the plans by publication in a newspaper of general circulation in such county. The notice shall advise interested persons where they may examine and obtain copies of the plans; and

(2) Conduct at least one (1) public meeting at least thirty (30) days prior to any action by the cooperative's board to adopt such a plan. The public meeting shall be scheduled with respect to the time and location with due consideration of the convenience in attendance by ratepayers and those to be affected by the plans. The public meeting shall include an opportunity for public questions and comments.

(b) The plan document shall describe and discuss the alternatives considered, state the cooperative board's preferred alternative and the reasons therefore.

(c) The plan documents shall describe the nature, need and amount of the proposed investment, and the demand projections to which the proposed investment responds. The plan documents shall describe and quantify the consideration given to alternatives including demand changes due to rate increases, and changes due to energy efficiency, energy conservation, and distributed and renewable energy generation.

SECTION 4. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.